

**AGENDA MINUTES  
CITY COMMISSION MEETING  
CITY HALL, 501 W MEADOW STREET  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2025 5:05 PM**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The City of Leesburg Greater Leesburg Community Redevelopment Agency held a regular meeting on Monday, February 24, 2025, at Leesburg City Hall. Chairperson Reisman called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. with the following members present:

Commissioner Allyson Berry  
Commissioner Jimmy Burry  
Commissioner Jay Connell  
Commissioner Mike Pederson  
Commissioner Samantha Ponder  
Chairperson Alan Reisman

Commissioner John Sokol was absent. Also present were City Manager (CM) Al Minner, City Clerk (CC) J. Andi Purvis, Deputy City Clerk (DCC) Anna Rottermond, the news media, and others.

**INVOCATION**

Chairperson Reisman gave the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**2. APPROVE MINUTES:**

**A. Regular meeting held September 12, 2024**

Commissioner Burry made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of September 12, 2024, and Commissioner Berry seconded the motion.

Chairperson Reisman requested comments from the Commission and the audience. There were none.

The roll call vote was:

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Commissioner Pederson | Yes |
| Commissioner Berry    | Yes |
| Commissioner Ponder   | Yes |
| Commissioner Connell  | Yes |
| Commissioner Burry    | Yes |

Chairperson Reisman

Yes

Six yeas, no nays, the Commission approved the meeting minutes.

### 3. RESOLUTIONS:

- A. **Resolution of the Greater Leesburg Community Redevelopment Agency (GLCRA) of the City of Leesburg, Florida authorizing the Chairman and Secretary to execute a resolution approving Fiscal Year 2025 Façade Sign, and Landscape Grant Awards; and providing an effective date. (FSL Grants GLCRA 2025).**

#### ADOPTED RESOLUTION 62

Commissioner Pederson introduced the resolution to be read by title only. CC Purvis read the resolution by title only.

Commissioner Berry made a motion to adopt the resolution and Commissioner Pederson seconded the motion.

Chairperson Reisman requested comments from the Commission and the audience.

Commissioner Connell questioned if we only required one bid on the Napa Auto Parts application. **CM Minner** responded yes. **Commissioner Connell** wanted to verify that the city was going to give away taxpayer money based on one bid from a contractor who is located in Louisiana. **Chairperson Reisman** said his concern was with the sign builder being located out of state. **Commissioner Connell** commented that he could not believe that we were not requiring several bids before giving money away. **CM Minner** pointed out that it has not been asked for in the past, and nothing is written in the policy for that. However, they could amend the policy. **Commissioner Connell** said he would like to see multiple bids before giving money away. **Commissioner Berry** wanted to know what an average number of bids was. Is it two or three? **CM Minner** said he believed this program was up to \$25,000. **Commissioner Pederson** added that this was one of the larger ones. Most of them are smaller, so it has not been an issue. They have seen a lot of three-to-five thousand dollar contracts, but this one was about nineteen thousand dollars. If we did that, we should at least require bids for the larger amounts. He does not want people bidding out items for \$10,000 and under. **CM Minner** mentioned he could not remember how much this one was for. **Commissioner Connell** said the total was about \$34,000. **CM Minner** said that amount was above the requirement. He did not believe the amount was that high. **Chairperson Reisman** pointed out that he did not like that it was an out-of-state contractor. He would prefer to see at least one Leesburg or Lake County business bid on this. **Commissioner Connell** felt we should get more than one bid before giving any money away. **CM Minner** asked about the internal policy for an expenditure that is \$19,251. Are those three verbal quotes? **Deputy City Manager (DCM), Robert Hicks**, responded that they would be written quotes and not a solicitation. **Commissioner Connell** wanted to know if there were three quotes provided. **CM Minner** stated not with this program. If they want to amend it, they could, but in the past we have given out several FSL grants without quotes. If they want to add quotes, they could certainly do that. **Commissioner Connell** remarked that he would like to see multiple quotes. **Commissioner Pederson** said he would support this one, and then they could amend the policy after that. He did not want to blindside this applicant, but he would agree with that moving forward. **Chairperson Reisman** mentioned with this being a corporation, they may have to go through their corporate office for their signage, so that could be the issue. **CM Minner** said when they began this

program, they wanted to make the process as easy as possible for businesses to improve their facades, which in turn helps the city. They wanted to make this program business-friendly, and there were no issues until tonight. If they want to change the program, city staff have no issues doing that. However, they need to provide that direction. **Commissioner Connell** pointed out that there are multiple sign contractors in town and around Lake County. However, they most likely went straight to Napa, who handle their signs, and they did not solicit any quotes. **Commissioner Berry** indicated that the application for Napa was received on October 18, 2024, and the Mystic Ice Cream application was received after that. **Chairperson Reisman** asked, since both businesses are covered under the same resolution, were there any comments or questions on the Mystic Ice Cream request. **Commissioner Connell** said this request appears to be a mural. Did it go before the arts advisory board for their recommendation? **CM Minner** responded that he had a conversation with Amanda McLea, the President of the Center for the Arts, about this. She saw the mural during a meeting with him last week, and she was okay with the concept. However, staff failed to get this before the arts advisory board. They could restart this and send it to the art advisory board for their recommendation. During their meeting, they did not think this would be of significant concern to the commission, but they could send it back. **Commissioner Connell** stated this would be a mural on the side of a building, and it was decided that all murals go before the art advisory board for their review and recommendation prior to coming to the commission for approval. **Chairperson Reisman** said he shared the same concerns, and he is very pro-art, but we have a board in place, and we should not be bypassing them. Even though he was sure it was just an oversight. He would like to table both items. He would like the Mystic Ice Cream mural request to go before the arts advisory board for their recommendation and require Napa to get at least one local quote. **Commissioner Connell** said he would be good with that. **Commissioner Berry** said that sounded good.

Commissioner Pederson made a motion to table both applications indefinitely, and Commissioner Burry seconded the motion.

Chairperson Reisman asked if there was any further discussion. There were none.

The roll call vote was:

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Commissioner Berry    | Yes |
| Commissioner Ponder   | Yes |
| Commissioner Connell  | Yes |
| Commissioner Burry    | Yes |
| Commissioner Pederson | Yes |
| Chairperson Reisman   | Yes |

Six yeas, no nays, the Commission tabled the resolution.

#### 4. ROLL CALL:

**Commissioner Pederson** wanted to know if the commission wanted to talk about the limit now, since it was brought up. There was mention of a limit and it being over \$19,000. Do we want to mirror the city policy? **CM Minner** said those were two different things, and the limit on the FSL Grants is \$25,000. **Commissioner Pederson** continued to say the approval would be for two or three bids if they requested more than \$19,000. **CM Minner** stated the direction to him was \$0 to \$25,000 for the grant program, but they wanted three bids. **Commissioner Connell** agreed. **CM Minner** said if an applicant requests a \$1,000 sign, the commission still wants three bids. **Commissioner Burry** wanted to know if there were three local sign companies to get bids from. Since these are local businesses, are there three local sign companies for them to get bids from? **Commissioner Connell** said yes. **CM Minner** commented that he

knows of two, Mid-Florida Signs and Sign Crafters. **Commissioner Connell** said he did not care if the bids were all from Leesburg. He wants to see three bids anytime we give money away to make sure we are getting the best price. **Commissioner Berry** said she was okay with that. **Commissioner Pederson** said he was not sure about requiring a business to do that when they were only requesting five to ten thousand dollars. He would like to see a limit put on that. **Commissioner Ponder** wanted to know if there was an option to add a limit. **CM Minner** stated his recommendation would be to leave it as is. Since the inception of the FSL program, it has been this way. They should leave it as is, because we are trying to encourage businesses to get rid of monopole and non-conforming signs. We want them to come into compliance with signs which will enhance the aesthetics and beauty of our community. Having proper signage helps our community look good and it helps businesses. The more requirements they put on businesses, even if they are bids, will deter businesses from applying for the grant. However, he works at the collective wisdom of the commission. Also, the less expensive the sign is or if they just ask for paint, are they still going to require three bids? Right now, the program offers up to \$25,000 annually, and the requirements of the program are not beyond unreasonable fiduciary responsibility, but if the commission desires to require quotes, that is what we will do. **Commissioner Pederson** said they have offered this program since he has been on the commission, and there have been no issues. **CM Minner** agreed. They have been offering this program for the last five to eight years. **Commissioner Berry** wanted to know if they ever came across anything that was outrageous or inappropriate where they had to go back and question it? **CM Minner** responded no and everything was within the grant parameters of \$25,000. These are local businesses and most of them work with other local businesses on their FSL Grant. **Commissioner Burry** wanted to know if they should require a local company bid or just three bids? **Commissioner Ponder** said they could say preference for local vendors. **Commissioner Burry** stated they could use an out-of-town bid, but we need at least one local bid. **Commissioner Pederson** remarked that they were overly complicating this program and these are not big dollars. Also, the applicant is putting money into it too, so they do have skin in the game. **Commissioner Connell** said they were not over-complicating the process. They are asking the city for free money, and that is not asking that much. They are only requesting a couple of proposals. Nobody would have work done on their houses without getting at least two quotes to see what the costs would be. **Commissioner Pederson** pointed out that the applicants may have received a couple of quotes, and they may have just brought the lowest one. **Commissioner Connell** said he wants the quotes in writing, so they can see what has been submitted. That is not asking a lot since they are coming to the city asking for free money. They can provide a couple of quotes to make sure that we are not giving money away for something they could have done at half the price. **Commissioner Ponder** liked the idea of not putting a number on it. However, she would like them to provide at least one quote from a local vendor. **CM Minner** mentioned there have been a couple of concepts thrown out. **DCM Hicks** stated the representative from Napa Auto was in attendance, and he just told him that the corporate office only has two vendors they can use for their signs nationwide. They also see that on the purchasing side, because when they put out a bid if there is a statewide contract, they have to purchase through them. It does not matter if they are local or not. **Commissioner Pederson** thanked him for that comment. Based on that, he would support the Napa Auto Parts sign. He would also support Mystic Ice Cream as long as it goes before the art advisory board for their approval. **Chairperson Reisman** asked, knowing what we know about the Napa contract, do we want to remove the table? **Commissioner Pederson** withdrew his motion to table these items. **CM Minner** stated they are now back to the original motion to approve the resolution as presented.

Commissioner Pederson made a motion to approve the Napa sign as recommended and to send the Mystic Ice Cream mural to the art advisory board for their recommendations before coming back to the city commission.

Commissioner Connell said there should be two separate motions since they are two separate

projects. **Commissioner Pederson** withdrew his last motion.

Commissioner Pederson made a motion to approve the Napa sign as proposed, and Commissioner Burry seconded the motion.

Chairperson Reisman asked if there were any comments or questions on that motion. There were none.

The roll call vote was:

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Commissioner Ponder   | Yes |
| Commissioner Connell  | No  |
| Commissioner Burry    | Yes |
| Commissioner Pederson | Yes |
| Commissioner Berry    | Yes |
| Chairperson Reisman   | Yes |

Five yeas, one nay, the Commission approved the sign request from Napa Auto.

Commissioner Pederson made a motion to send the Mystic Ice Cream mural to the art advisory board for their recommendation before coming back to the commission for approval, and Commissioner Burry seconded the motion.

Chairperson Reisman asked if there was any discussion. He asked the applicant if he wanted to say anything.

Daryl Day, owner of Mystic Ice Cream, said he was thankful for their consideration of his grant proposal. This was the third year he had applied for the grant. The first year he did not get it in on time, and the second year the building owner submitted a proposal for something bigger, so they won and he did not. They are hoping this year will be different. They are looking at a \$4,000 project. They did what was asked of them with the grant application submission. It did not say in the application process that the request had to go before an art advisory board for review and recommendation, and it did not say they needed to have two or three bids. If they did, they would have done that and submitted it at the time of application. He would be happy to do whatever is asked. The request is for a mural on the side of the building, and it would look awesome. **Chairperson Reisman** said he respects the comments, but the commission is asking that the process be followed when it comes to murals. He apologized for the oversight. This mural needs to go before the art advisory board for their recommendation before coming back to the city commission. He asked if there was a date set for an art advisory board meeting. **CM Minner** replied no. **Chairperson Reisman** pointed out that staff would get a meeting scheduled sooner rather than later. **Commissioner Pederson** stated this is a new process and this was the first mural to come through since creating the art advisory board, so that was why it fell through the cracks. **CM Minner** clarified that this was actually the second mural, and he would fall on the sword for that. He encouraged the commission to approve this since there is a timing issue, and they are only asking for \$4,000. They are asking the applicant to wait another thirty to sixty days for them to go through the process. Again, this is a new process, and they could hold him accountable, but it is not the applicant's fault. This was put on his desk and he was about to yank it when Amanda McLea came in to see him. She saw it and thought it looked good. So, henceforth, he would say approve it and move forward or do not approve it because it is ugly. However, no one has mentioned anything about it being unappealing. Moving forward, all murals will go before the art advisory board prior to coming before the commission. Also, the petitioner made a good argument because in the application it does not say it has to go before the arts advisory board, but when the program was contemplated we did not have the arts advisory board. Remember, the arts advisory board was formed back when Maria Stefanovic was still with the Center for

the Arts, and it immediately crashed due to circumstances surrounding the Center for the Arts. In all honesty, his office, including himself, had not given a lot of thought to the art advisory board. He encouraged the commission to approve it or approve it pending the art advisory board review because that would save one more step. He assured the commission that there would be no other instances where they fail to follow the process. **Commissioner Connell** remarked that he was not going to say anything about the mural because he wanted it to go before the art advisory board first. However, based on the comments, he believes that this mural does not fit the downtown. It does not fit the theme of what we are trying to accomplish downtown. He could not see how it fits into the historical theme that they are trying to portray downtown. There would be an ice cream truck on the side of a building. He was not going to bring that up tonight, but based on the comments he wanted to. He was going to bring it up after it went before the art advisory board. He does not particularly care for this rendering to be in the downtown. **Chairperson Reisman** stated art is subjective, and he may not like everything, but this is a good representation of that business. If you have been to his store, this is very much the style and eclecticism of the store. He is a long-standing good business in downtown, and he would be in favor of a motion approving this pending the art advisory board review. This is a good start for the murals that we want in our city, and it is a good representation of that business. It is also fun and inviting for the kids who come downtown. **Commissioner Connell** stated he was sure it would represent the business as being fun, but it is not a good representation for the downtown as a whole. **Commissioner Pederson** withdrew his motion.

Commissioner Pederson made a motion to approve the Mystic Ice Cream mural subject to review and approval of the art advisory board, and Commissioner Burry seconded that motion.

Chairperson Reisman asked if there was any further discussion. There were none.

The roll call vote was:

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Commissioner Connell  | No  |
| Commissioner Burry    | Yes |
| Commissioner Pederson | Yes |
| Commissioner Berry    | Yes |
| Commissioner Ponder   | Yes |
| Chairperson Reisman   | Yes |

Five yeas, one nay, the Commission approved the mural for Mystic Ice Cream pending art advisory board review.

**Commissioner Berry** had nothing to comment on.

**Commissioner Ponder** stated they held a community clean-up event this past Saturday, and they removed three and a half tons of trash from the east side of town. She knows the commissioner for the Carver Heights CRA board was in attendance, and she may want to speak about what happened on her side of town. However, the event was very successful. There were ten adults and several children who came out and worked hard. They met at the corner store. Commissioner Berry donated breakfast and her husband and company donated lunch. They had a good time celebrating while making some great improvements to the neighborhood.

**Commissioner Connell** had no further comment.

**Commissioner Burry** said as long as they were talking about murals downtown. On Orange Avenue before heading down the hill there is a mural on the wall across from the parking lot. He was not sure if

that went through the art advisory board, so he would like that investigated. **Commissioner Berry** wanted to know what the mural was. **Commissioner Burry** said he was not sure. It might be a bass fish along with some other things. He was not sure, but he would like an opinion from the art advisory board, since that was why they created the art advisory board. **Chairperson Reisman** asked the staff to get a hold of the building owner to find out more information. **CM Minner** said staff would look into it.

**Chairperson Reisman** had nothing to comment on this evening.

**5. ADJOURN:**

**PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES NEEDING ASSISTANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY OF THESE PROCEEDINGS SHOULD CONTACT THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT, ADA COORDINATOR, AT 728-9740, 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING.**

**F.S.S. 286.0105 "If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the Commission with respect to any matter considered at this meeting, they will need a record of the proceedings, and that for such purpose they may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based." The City of Leesburg does not provide this verbatim record.**

With a motion by Commissioner Burry and a second by Commissioner Berry, the meeting adjourned at 5:27 p.m.